

For Immediate Release

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New Music Takes Centre Stage at Wigmore Hall this Autumn: 20 World/UK Premières to include the First 'Voices of Today' Commission by Stewart Goodyear

- **Stewart Goodyear** world première on 23 September is the first of 16 'Voices of Today' works, commissioned to support composers during the coronavirus pandemic
- **Errollyn Wallen's** music is featured as she makes her Wigmore Hall performing debut
- Special focuses on composers **Brett Dean**, **Laurence Osborn** and **Joseph Phibbs**

A new work for solo piano by the Canadian pianist and composer **Stewart Goodyear** receives its world première at London's Wigmore Hall on Saturday 23 September 2023. Performed by Goodyear himself, making his Wigmore Hall debut, it is the first of 16 new 'Voices of Today' works commissioned to support composers during the coronavirus pandemic.

The work is inspired by Robert Frost's 1914 poem *Mending Wall* which, as Goodyear explains, "*describes change and the struggle of humanity to embrace it. During the pandemic, traditional thoughts of "fences making good neighbors" were challenged, the divisions that keep people apart finally out in the open.*" A renowned interpreter of Beethoven, Goodyear performs *Mending Wall* alongside Beethoven's "Hammerklavier" sonata which "*depicts this struggle similarly, as it wrestles between the past and future traditions of music, and inevitably breaks the wall separating the two.*"

Seeking as diverse a group as possible, Wigmore Hall invited applications from composers all over the world, aged 18 and up, never commissioned by the Hall before. From 700 submissions, 16 winning 'Voices of Today' composers, aged between 24 and 63, were selected by a panel of fellow composers across two rounds. Three more 'Voices of Today' works will be premiered in the new year, and the remaining dozen can be heard, four a season, until 2027.

Wigmore Hall Director, John Gilhooly, said,

"Wigmore Hall's commitment to championing new music and supporting all the diversity in classical music comes sharply into focus this autumn. From Errollyn Wallen, performing here for the first time, to our day devoted to Laurence Osborn in November, today's music is there. I am especially pleased to present the first work commissioned through our 'Voices of Today' programme in September. By creating this platform for composers to share their unique perspectives and push boundaries, we will showcase new voices, brimming with originality and challenging us all to listen afresh. I am hugely grateful to the Marchus Trust for supporting us in this major new initiative."

Goodyear's world première comes during an autumn with an abundance of new music at Wigmore Hall, including 20 world & UK premières.

Belize-born British composer **Errollyn Wallen**, who was on the judging panel for the 'Voices of Today' commissioning programme, makes her Wigmore Hall performing debut on 28 October singing from her own *Errollyn Wallen Songbook*. With improvisation at their heart, Wallen writes many of her songs, she has said, as a "*bare skeleton, designed to act as a springboard for flights of*

fancy,” by the performer, “*whether from a pop, classical, folk, or jazz background.*” Her music is also performed by soprano Ruby Hughes (16 Sep) and Dame Sarah Connolly (3 Nov).

On 25 November, three concerts are devoted to the composer **Laurence Osborn** whose music, full of originality and humour, won him a Royal Philharmonic Society Composition Prize in 2017. With a lineup including the Britten Sinfonia, the Castalian String Quartet, harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani, and the Marian Consort, two world premières are performed – a new Wigmore Hall-commissioned string quartet and, in collaboration with the poet Joseph Minden, a new work for vocal ensemble – plus the London première of *Coin Op Automata*, which he describes as “*a series of little mechanical tableaux,*” inspired by “*all sorts of coin-operated machines*”. It is performed alongside Osborn’s works *Rendering Error* and *Automaton*, interspersed with music by CPE Bach.

Joseph Phibbs’s music is the focus of two concerts on Saturday 8 October featuring the Piatti Quartet. Joined by cellist Tim Lowe, they première Phibbs’s Wigmore Hall-commissioned first string quintet and they perform his *Cantus*, inspired by a Bach Cantata, at 2pm. Earlier in the day, the Piatti perform his first string quartet, which was written for them. Joined by saxophonist Huw Wiggin, pianist Noriko Ogawa and cellist Guy Johnston the programme also features an elegy in memory of Phibbs’s teacher, the American composer Steven Stucky.

Brad Mehldau’s *14 Reveries* (20 Sep) and *I Saw a Peacock* by **Brian Elias** (28 Dec), both commissioned by Wigmore Hall, are première and Australian **Brett Dean** (2023/24 Composer in Residence) conducts Wigmore Hall Associate Artists Apartment House and Irish tenor Robin Tritschler in a programme featuring Dean’s work *Winter Songs*, and music by **Peter Maxwell Davies** and **Hans Abrahamsen** (6 Nov).

Sir George Benjamin and Ensemble Modern (12 Sep), string quartet Brooklyn Rider (13 Sep), pianist Jeremy Denk (15 Sep) and string group 12 Ensemble (16 Sep), all leading contemporary music specialists, will all appear this autumn at Wigmore Hall. Amongst the 65 works this autumn by composers working today are two by Wigmore Hall Associate Artist **Héloïse Werner**, including a new companion piece to Schumann’s song cycle *Dichterliebe* (23 Oct) as well as new works by **Sally Beamish** (27 Oct), **Jonathan Dove** (7 Nov), **Oliver Leith** (16 Sep), **Thea Musgrave** (9 Nov), **Steve Reich** (20 Nov) and others.

Full listings information for Wigmore Hall’s autumn programme can be found at <https://www.wigmore-hall.org.uk/whats-on/series/autumn-2023>.

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High-resolution images can be found at: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/mih8zt4zl958px5/AABzpMc-gaoWXFjsKSbL4ysia?dl=0>

Notes to Editors
About Wigmore Hall

‘The world’s greatest chamber music venue’ – The Times

Located in the heart of London's West End, Wigmore Hall each year presents more than 500 concerts featuring some 2,500 international artists performing music spanning more than six centuries. It is the UK's largest programme of classical music concerts.

Since it opened in 1901, Wigmore Hall has been home to the world's most sought-after soloists and chamber musicians as well as a launch pad for the most exciting young artists. Renowned for its intimate, crystalline acoustic and beautiful interior, complete with an Arts and Crafts cupola above the stage, the Hall has a capacity of 552 seats and draws in more than 5 million annual digital visitors globally with its free high-definition streamed concerts and broadcast partnership with BBC Radio 3. Under the direction of John Gilhooly CBE since 2005, Wigmore Hall also hosts a biennial International Song Competition and a triennial International String Quartet Competition, attracting exceptionally talented young musicians from around the world.

Wigmore Hall's celebrated Learning programme presents an additional 500 events a year. They include family concerts at the Hall for audiences as young as babies aged 1 and under, as well as external events in collaboration with community, health, social care and education organisations to engage people of all ages who face barriers to participating in creative arts activity. A range of special ticket schemes, including £5 tickets for Under 35s, have brought tens of thousands of new young audiences to the Hall since the end of the coronavirus pandemic.

About Stuart Goodyear

Proclaimed "a phenomenon" by the Los Angeles Times and "one of the best pianists of his generation" by the Philadelphia Inquirer, Stewart Goodyear is an accomplished concert pianist, improviser and composer. Mr. Goodyear has performed with, and has been commissioned by, many of the major orchestras and chamber music organizations around the world.

Last year, Orchid Classics released Mr. Goodyear's recording of his suite for piano and orchestra, "Callaloo" and his piano sonata. His recent commissions include a Piano Quintet for the Penderecki String Quartet, and a piano work for the Honens Piano Competition.

Mr. Goodyear's discography includes the complete sonatas and piano concertos of Beethoven, as well as concertos by Tchaikovsky, Grieg and Rachmaninov, an album of Ravel piano works, and an album, entitled "For Glenn Gould", which combines repertoire from Mr. Gould's US and Montreal debuts. His Rachmaninov recording received a Juno nomination for Best Classical Album for Soloist and Large Ensemble Accompaniment. Mr. Goodyear's recording of his own transcription of Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker (Complete Ballet)", was chosen by the New York Times as one of the best classical music recordings of 2015. His discography is released on the Marquis Classics, Orchid Classics, Bright Shiny Things and Steinway and Sons labels. His newest recording, Adolphus Hailstork's Piano Concerto with the Buffalo Philharmonic under JoAnn Falletta, was released in March 2023 on the Naxos label. His composition for solo cello and piano, "The Kapok" was recorded by Inbal Negev and Mr. Goodyear on Avie Records, and his suite for solo violin, "Solo", was commissioned and recorded by Miranda Cuskson for the Urlicht Audiovisual label.

Highlights for the 2023-24 season are his performances at Summer for the City (Lincoln Center, NY), Southbank Centre (UK), Schleswig-Holstein Festival, his recital debut at Wigmore Hall, his debut with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and his return with the Milwaukee Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, and his Carnegie Hall debut with the Royal Conservatory Orchestra.

World, UK and London Premières at Wigmore Hall this autumn

Andreia Pinto Correia Aere senza stelle (UK, 13 Sep)

Colin Jacobsen A Short While To Be Here (UK, 13 Sep)

Akshaya Tucker Hollow Flame (UK, 13 Sep)

Oliver Leith Non Voglio Mai Vedere Il Sole Tramontare from *Last Days* (world, 16 Sep)

Brad Mehdau 14 Reveries for Piano (UK, 20 Sep)

Stewart Goodyear Mending Wall (world, 23 Sep)

Joseph Phibbs New work for string quintet (world, 7 Oct)
Louise Drewett How I Heard; Lament (world, 9 Nov)
Joseph Howard So they gave me opium; Wax and Wail (world, 9 Nov)
Thea Musgrave Orlando's return to London...as a WOMAN from *ORLANDO - an Escapade* (world, 9 Nov)
Raymond Yiu Chinese Whispers (world, 9 Nov)
Jannik Giger Uraufführung (world, 11 Nov)
David Matthews Kingsdown Suite (world, 20 Nov)
Laurence Osborn New work for string quintet (world, 25 Nov)
Laurence Osborn New work (world, 25 Nov)
Laurence Osborn Coin Op Automata (London, 25 Nov)
Jake Heggie Fantasy Suite 1803 (UK, 27 Nov)
Dai Fujikura Piano Sonata (UK, 16 Dec)
Brian Elias I saw a peacock (world, 28 Dec)
David Ludwig Swan Song (UK, 30 Dec)